

CLINTON HILL NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL  
Newark 26 Shanley Ave. N.J.

August 21, 1958

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STATEMENT BY OFFICERS OF THE CLINTON HILL NEIGHBORHOOD  
COUNCIL ON FAILURE OF HOUSE TO PASS URBAN RENEWAL  
FUNDS.

Clinton Hill residents are going to be hurt by the failure of the House on August 18 to pass the housing urban renewal bill. This bill would have provided funds for several Essex County projects, among them the Lower Clinton Hill Urban Renewal Project. The defeat of this bill lies at the door of leadership in both major political parties. Although the bill was basically sponsored by the Democrats, it was House Speaker Rayburn, a Democrat, who allowed the bill to come from the Rules Committee onto the floor under a mandatory 2/3 vote needed for approval. The bulk of the opposition votes came from Republicans, among them Representatives Frelinghuysen and Auchincloss of New Jersey. But 23 Southern Democrats also voted "no," thereby insuring that the bill would fail, which it did by six votes.

The Congress has approved over \$70 billion to be spent by the Federal Government in the coming fiscal year. Much of this money will be used to build the external defenses of the United States through foreign aid, missile projects, and nuclear weapons development. The Congress is underestimating the importance of such internal defenses as the welfare of American citizens by its failure to approve urban renewal funds. Vast sums spent for weapons are being rapidly dissipated through obsolescence, and

poor design, according to recent reports by Congressional committees. Money spent in urban renewal projects like the one planned in Clinton Hill, in contrast, is a long range investment with high returns. Property values are stabilized and retables maintained. Welfare, police, and other municipal costs are kept down, because pride in home and apartment promote respect for community. The commercial and industrial aspects of the defeated bill which would have spurred the Penn Plaza and Central Ward Light Industrial plans, would have provided more jobs at high pay for Newark area workers. The Federal Government would have received a direct return in income taxes for the funds spent in such renewal projects.

While we as a nation may not be able to ignore the race to the moon, neither can we ignore the race against time which our cities are engaged in, the outcome of which can either be the creation of new slums or the preservation and development of decent communities.

A battle has been lost, but the campaign for urban renewal can yet be won. As part of our determination to maintain and improve Clinton Hill, we shall use every means--mail, phone, and delegations--to impress upon the Congress the importance of providing renewal appropriations at the next session. We urge other civic and business organizations to do likewise. We respectfully suggest that the Municipal Council memorialize Congress to pass a renewal bill at the earliest possible moment. We suggest that Mayor Carlin join with officials from other New Jersey municipalities to express his support for Federal assistance in renewal programs.

The temporary setback to the Lower Clinton Hill Urban Renewal Project increased the necessity for other constructive measures. On the city's part, these include development of off-street parking at 534 Clinton Avenue, a site to which the city already has title; strict enforcement of the housing, zoning, and sanitary codes, with speedy prosecution of persistent violators; reduction in class size at the elementary schools in the Clinton Hill area, and beginning of the one-side-of-the-street parking system for more efficient street cleaning. On the Clinton Hill Neighborhood Council's part, we shall, through our 20 block branches and 11 member institutions, expand our program of welcoming newcomers into the community; encourage improvements by individual homeowners; press absentee property owners to maintain their buildings; encourage community-center programs in the area, and seek ways and means of bringing middle income housing to Clinton Hill.

Signed:

Stanley E. Winters, President MI 3-6880  
The Rev. Stanley J. Hallett, vice-Pres. Es 5-2528  
Mildred Helms, vice-Pres.  
Elaine Smith, vice-Pres.  
Dr. Alfred E. Pinn, Secretary